

Corruption Censure Among Gen Y Public Servants: Do Organizational Culture, Work Values and Religiosity Matter?

Khulida Kirana Yahya¹, Tan Fee Yean¹, Johanim Johari¹, Nur Ain Saad¹

¹ School of Business Management, College of Business,
Universiti Utara Malaysia, 06010 UUM Sintok, Kedah.
khulida@uum.edu.my

Organizational culture, work values and religion play a vital role in shaping and controlling employees' behavior and perception of corruption. This paper examines the relationship between organizational culture, work values, religion and corruption censure in a public organization setting. The instruments used to evaluate the variables are taken from various sources. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to Gen Y respondents in nine public organizations. A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed to Gen Y employees who are currently serving at public organizations in Kedah. A total of 117 questionnaires were returned and used for further analysis. Data was analyzed using SMART PLS to investigate the relationship between the variables. Organizational culture and work values indicate a positive influence on corruption censure while religiosity does not have an effect on corruption censure.

Keywords: Gen Y, public employees, organizational culture, work values, religiosity, corruption.

1.0 Introduction

Malaysia is repositioning itself to achieve a high-income nation status and this is reflected in many of its Development Plans (e.g., the 11th Malaysia Plan). While much effort is being taken to accomplish the plans, corruption seems to be one of the obstacles to achieving the plans successfully. The rise of high-profile corruption cases has made the public more aware of and sensitive to corruption and its negative consequences for the nation. The public has criticized openly the role of the government, in general and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) in particular, in eradicating corruption. There are calls to the government to be more transparent in undertaking programs and instituting legislation for tackling corruption.

The 13th General Elections in Malaysia has led to a significant change in behavior among the younger generation (Gen Y) regarding many issues, particularly corruption. Religious and cultural values are the main factors influencing the youngsters' perception of issues related to corruption and how it should be dealt with. Their perception of an ideal society has changed and it is therefore crucial for Malaysia to lay the foundation for a healthy and resilient nation as it moves forward to achieving Vision 2020, i.e., to become an industrialized and developed country. Research has shown that the increasing occurrences of corruption in the Malaysian public sector are the result of poor governance (Nik Rosnah, 2008; "Rasuah PBT", 2005). Balboa and Medalla (2006) also confirm that corruption can be attributed to poor governance because it leads to the ineffectiveness of organizational and management functions.

Despite various measures, the incidence of corruption is on the rise. The prevalence of corruption, incompetence, malpractices, abuse of power, fraud and other unethical behavior as well as the lack of workplace motivation have all contributed to the decline in integrity among individuals, organizations and society at large. Renewed effort to combat corruption in Malaysia is encouraging but it is very obvious that more concerted efforts need to be taken if Malaysia hopes to succeed in its attempt to reduce corruption, particularly in public organizations.

In line with this, scholars, such as Callanan and Greenhaus (2008); Edmunds and Turner (2005); Giancola (2006); Haynes (2011); and Smola and Sutton, (2002) call for additional scientific research to investigate the ever-changing values and attitudes of employees in the workplace, while Arsenault (2004) argues that generational differences have been 'plagued by inaccurate misconceptions' mainly due to the lack of empirical research. Moreover, the entry of increasingly higher number of Gen Y into the workplace augments the need for additional investigation. In Malaysia, the Gen Ys comprised over 40 percent of the country's population and they are also known as Millennials aged between 18 to 34 in 2015. In other words, they are born between 1981 and 1997.

This study is based on the view that the 'generation' variable is a meaningful and psychological variable, as it encompasses the culture of one's upbringing during a specific time period. Each generation is molded by distinctive experiences during the critical developmental periods (Caspi, 1987; Stewart & Healy, 1989). The pervasive influence of parents, peers, the media and popular culture creates common value systems among people growing up at a particular time that distinguishes them from people who grow up in another time period. According to Twenge and Campbell (2008), changes in cultures occur gradually and take time to appear in individuals' personality traits and attitudes. Thus, it is vital to determine the Gen Y's opinion on corruption censure in Malaysian public organizations. The objective of the study is to

examine the relationship between organizational culture, work values, religion and corruption censure among the Gen Y workers in public organizations.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Corruption

The word 'corruption' has various meanings. According to Park and Blenkinsopp (2011), corruption is a form of behavior which violates the official ethics of the public services. Barker and Carter (1994) defined corruption as acts containing three elements: violation of the law, rules, regulations or ethical standards; misuse of an officer's position; and acceptance of some actual or expected material reward or gain. Goel and Rich (1989) reveal that corruption leads to further inefficiency in service delivery as public officials often fail to perform their duty in anticipation of receiving bribes.

Corruption also can be defined as the misuse of public office for private gain (Svensson, 2005). Several examples can be found relating to corruption, such as the sale of government property by government officials, payments in public procurement, bribery and misuse of government funds. Svensson (2005) stated that corruption is a reflection of a country's legal, economic, cultural and political institution. The reaction of corruption can be either beneficial or harmful, such as corruption occurs when individuals pay bribes to avoid penalties for harmful conduct or when monitoring of rules is incomplete, such as in the case of theft. Corruption is often the result of the actions of individuals or groups in order to achieve special interests (Omer & Syed Omar, 2012).

In addition, corruption is a global phenomenon (Adzanela, 2011). It happens all over the world but does not affect societies/countries in the same way. It is the scale to which it affects the average or non-privileged citizens in their everyday life that makes the difference. It is precisely in this sense that corruption is linked to human rights and dignity. There are two types of corruption as stated by Adzanela (2011), i.e., petty corruption and grand corruption. Petty corruption means corruption that people experience in their encounter with public officials and when they use public services; while grand corruption is corruption by heads of states, ministers and top officials and usually involves large amounts of assets.

From the above explanation, corruption can be defined in many ways. Corruption happens all over the world. Lee (2013) verifies that Malaysia ranked 53 out of 117 countries surveyed compared to 2012 score of 49 and ranked 54 out of 176 countries.

2.2 Organizational Culture

Hofstede (1984) defines organizational culture as values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors which represent an organization's working environment, objectives and vision. Organizational culture affects organizational life in such a way as to influence every aspect of the organization and also the productivity level of the organization in the sense that it influences employee's behaviour to work and it is the input of the employees to the organization that determines the organizational productivity level (Ojo, 2012). Organizational culture may affect the productivity, performance commitment, self-confidence and ethical behaviour

According to Hossein et al. (2012), organizational culture significantly affects staff behavior and actions; it plays a crucial role in internally controlling staff behavior, which can prevent corrupt practices. They also found a significant relationship between Hofstede's organizational culture variables of power distance, individualism and avoiding uncertainty and organizational corruption.

Organizational culture is the set of shared values, beliefs and norms that influence the way employees think, feel and behave in the workplace (Schein, 2011). Socialization and training, rites and rituals, communication network and symbols are transferred to an organization's members which then become organizational culture. Organizational culture has four functions: gives members a sense of identity; increases their commitment; reinforces organizational values; and serves as a control mechanism for shaping behaviour (Nelson & Quick, 2011). Organizational culture has the potential to enhance organizational performance, employees' job satisfaction and the sense of certainty about problem-solving (Kotter, 2012). Lunenberg (2011) agrees that organizational culture also affects organizational effectiveness. Thus, it is hypothesized that: Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between organizational culture and corruption censure.

2.3 Work Value

Work values can be defined as the results people desire and feel they should achieve through work (Brief, 1998; Frieze, Olson & Murrell, 2006). Work values influence employees' perceptions of preferences in the workplace, exerting a direct effect on employees' attitude and behavior (Dose, 1997); job decisions (Judge & Bretz, 1992); and perceptions and problem-solving (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987). Thus, if a person is equipped with a higher level of work values, he or she is said to be focused on the context of work and motivated by the salary received, job security and a pleasant physical working environment (Kekesi & Agyemang, 2014).

Work values are a vital part of a complete package of a worker at the workplace. This situation is closely related to beliefs, understanding of an individual and attitude towards giving commitment to his or her job. Value is seen as presenting what is important to human beings. People bring along their values wherever they go, including to the workplace and this has an effect on both employers and colleagues. Therefore, understanding work value orientations of employees is important for management and the Human Resources (HR) department when applying work practices in the organization (Chandrakumara, 2011). Additionally, values may impact the behavior of employees and this can help to increase the understanding among human power in an organization on the employees' behavior at work (Chandrakumara, 2011).

According to Elizur (1984), work values are defined as the importance individuals assign to certain outcomes related to attributes of work. These work value attributes are perceived by individuals to be important to work. While some organizational behavioral scholars contend work values are similar to employee motivation, others suggest work values are specifically concerned with the importance assigned to work outcomes (Sagie et al., 1996). Gursoy, Chi and Karadag (2013) indicate that understanding employees' values is important because the extent to which employees value their job influences their attitude towards work. White (2006) implies that values have cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions that are closely linked to motivation and satisfaction. Several studies report that values are likely to have important influence over a range of attitudes and behaviors (Brown, 2002). Kekesi and Agyemang (2014) reveal work values as being

closely related to attitude and behavior in the workplace and can be categorized as the personal value type. Work values affect behavior at work and this includes job performance among employees, as indicated by Liao, Lu, Huang and Chiang (2012). Besides, work values can enhance job performance and help to generate better involvement in the tasks given, which in turn help the organization to understand employees better (Liao et al., 2012).

Consequently, the morale and ethics of the civil servants are also associated with work values inherent in their performance achievement. Morale can influence workers' performance (Linz, Good & Huddleston, 2006); and increase productivity (Judge et al., 2001). Imam, Abbasi and Muneer (2013), in their study on ethics and job performance, found significant results. When people have work values, they will be determined to consider what is important in their life; while morale and ethics determine what is or not appropriate in one's life (Chippendale, 2001). Since employees from the same generation are likely to share similar norms, it is likely that their work values and attitude to work are influenced by the generation they belong to (Gursoy, Chi & Zingales, 2013).

Research by Sihombing (2014) indicates that corruption is a non-positive youth value; it has been a major problem faced by Indonesians for decades (Robertson-Snape, 1999). Pande and Jain (2014) reveal that there is strong evidence that values impact individual behavior. Hence, the link between morale and ethics and work values is indirectly related to corruption censure since work values do influence behavior. Therefore, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 2: There is significant relationship between work values and corruption censure.

2.4 Religiosity

Religion is an element of culture that diffuses every aspect of a society and permeates the life of individuals, whether one is a believer or a non-believer (Hamza, 2010). Johnstone (1975) states that religion is a system of beliefs and practices that dictates an individual's responses and interpretations regarding what is supernatural and sacred. Religion can influence people's goals, decisions, motivation, purpose and satisfaction. This influence also plays a dominant role in shaping an individual's attitude and behavior towards material goods and services.

Religion plays a vital ethical role in modern life. From a religious standpoint, religious laws are absolute and shape an individual's life totally. Faith, rather than reasoning and knowledge, provides the foundation for a moral life based on religious beliefs (Vitell & Paolillo, 2003). Religiosity is also known to have an influence on both human behavior and attitudes (Weaver & Agle, 2002). According to them, an individual's ethical behavior is influenced by religious self-identity. This self-identity is in turn formed by the internalization of role expectations offered by religion.

According to Zuckerman, Siberman and Hall (2013), religiosity can be defined as the degree of involvement in some or all facets of religion. Facets include belief in supernatural agents, costly commitment to the agents, like offering of property, using beliefs in those agents to lower existential anxieties, such as anxiety over death and communal rituals and validating and affirming religious belief. Allport (1950) separates religious commitment into intrinsic religiosity and extrinsic religiosity. Intrinsic religiosity means religion is a meaning-endowing framework within which all life is understood (Donahue, 1985); while extrinsic religiosity refers to the religion of

comfort and social convention, a self-serving, instrumental approach shaped to serve oneself. Thus, intrinsic religiosity is assumed to have a positive relationship to ethical beliefs.

The work of Waithima (2010) indicates that religious affiliation affects an individual's propensity to act corruptly. He further indicates that people's religious affiliation matters in the fight against corruption. Flavin and Ledet (2010) find that states in America with a higher proportion of the population professing Catholicism have a higher level of corruption in the government, where one's religious beliefs impact on one's conduct and behavior. Melgar, Rossi and Smith (2010) indicate that there are no significant differences among religious groups. They further add that the degree of religiosity does influence perception of corruption, where they found that attending religious services more often reduces corruption. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 3: There is significant relationship between religiosity and corruption censure.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Procedures

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to Gen Y respondents in nine public organizations in Alor Setar, Kedah. The researchers went to the organizations and personally gave the questionnaires to the contact persons, who had been contacted prior to the researchers' visit. They were informed of the research objective and guidelines to answer all items in the questionnaire.

The questionnaires comprised items to measure corruption, organizational culture, work values and religiosity. The instrument developed by Jiang et al. (2012) consisting of 13 questions was employed to measure corruption censure. A total of eight items were used to evaluate the organizational culture construct which was developed by Denison and Mishra (1995). Work values construct was measured by eight items, adopted from Blood (1969). This study used the 10 items from the Santa Clara Strength of Religious Faith Questionnaire developed by Plante and Boccaccini (1997) to measure religiosity. Respondents were asked to respond to the items by indicating their level of agreement using a seven-point Likert scale (i.e., 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree).

3.2 Sample

Purposive sampling method was utilized for the data collection among employees of public organizations located in Alor Setar, Kedah. Since the researchers were not able to obtain the number of Gen Y workers in each organization, 15 to 20 questionnaires were given to the contact person to be distributed to the intended group of respondents. The unit of analysis is Gen Y employees (below 34 years old at the time of questionnaire distribution), irrespective of their positions in the organizations. A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed but only 150 questionnaires were returned. In total, only 117 were found to be usable, representing a usable rate of 73.13%.

4.0 Results

4.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The 117 respondents comprised 49 (41.9%) male and 68 (58.1%) female employees. In terms of marital status, 61 (52.1%) are married while the rest are single. A total of 20 (17.1%) respondents are less than 24 years old; 52 (44.4%) are 25 to 29 years old; and 40 (34.2%) are between 30 to 34 years old. In terms of religion, 116 respondents (99.1%) are Muslims while only one is a Buddhist. A total of 61 (52.1%) respondents had work tenure of less than three years. Majority of the respondents totaling 88 (75.2%) are from the support staff category although 39 (33.3%) have degrees as their highest academic achievement. With regards to respondents' income level, 51 (43.6%) receive a salary of less than RM1,500 and another 50 (42.7%) receive a salary of between RM1,501-RM3,000.

4.2 Validity and Reliability

Data was analysed using Smart PLS 2.0. To ensure the measurement items are valid and reliable, the data was analyzed using a few tests: internal consistency (i.e., loading of each item); convergent validity; and discriminant validity. Figure 1 depicts the results of the measurement model and the details of the results of validity and reliability are indicated in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Table 1 shows the factor loadings of all measurement items. Four items of work values (i.e., WV1, WV3, WV5 and WV8) and one item of religiosity (i.e., R5) were deleted. In addition, three items of corruption (i.e., C7, C14 and C15) were also deleted from further analysis due to their low loading value, which was less than 0.50. To measure convergent validity of each construct's factor loadings, average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) were used. According to Barclay et al. (1995), the values of AVE for each construct should be greater than 0.50. The results showed that the value of AVE of all constructs except religiosity was greater than 0.50. Although the value of AVE of religiosity was lower than 0.50, this construct was retained since it still satisfied the criteria of content validity and discriminant validity. In addition, to satisfy convergent validity, CR for all constructs should be higher than 0.70 as suggested by Hair et al. (2010). As indicated in Table 2, the values of CR for organizational culture, work values, religiosity and corruption are 0.892, 0.810, 0.895 and 0.954 respectively, all of which are above the acceptable value of 0.70.

Table 1: Results of confirmatory factor analysis

Variables	Measurement item	Factor1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Organizational culture	OC1	0.581	0.431	0.242	0.520
	OC2	0.748	0.541	0.389	0.664
	OC3	0.799	0.517	0.336	0.556
	OC4	0.822	0.529	0.322	0.532
	OC5	0.777	0.476	0.260	0.361
	OC6	0.699	0.532	0.344	0.282
	OC7	0.752	0.495	0.336	0.273
	OC8	0.753	0.477	0.305	0.252

Work value	WV2	0.560	0.769	0.399	0.461
	WV4	0.530	0.814	0.356	0.590
	WV6	0.447	0.725	0.385	0.507
	WV7	0.410	0.552	0.269	0.264
Religiosity	R1	0.363	0.352	0.693	0.315
	R2	0.354	0.204	0.574	0.296
	R3	0.323	0.329	0.772	0.298
	R4	0.283	0.375	0.773	0.377
	R6	0.259	0.312	0.707	0.241
	R7	0.286	0.425	0.737	0.360
	R8	0.301	0.412	0.648	0.287
	R9	0.264	0.347	0.780	0.366
	R10	0.289	0.329	0.585	0.118
Corruption	C1	0.394	0.434	0.298	0.764
	C2	0.472	0.440	0.286	0.652
	C3	0.446	0.504	0.215	0.637
	C4	0.385	0.523	0.422	0.854
	C5	0.397	0.549	0.427	0.869
	C6	0.399	0.606	0.420	0.812
	C8	0.478	0.503	0.435	0.884
	C9	0.544	0.526	0.330	0.758
	C10	0.561	0.514	0.379	0.824
	C11	0.518	0.572	0.373	0.903
	C12	0.556	0.578	0.385	0.910
	C13	0.575	0.678	0.338	0.878

Table 2: Results of convergent validity

Model construct	AVE	CR	α
Organizational culture	0.674	0.892	0.883
Work value	0.521	0.810	0.697
Religiosity	0.491	0.895	0.870
Corruption	0.912	0.954	0.953

Note: AVE = Average variance extracted (AVE); CR = Composite reliability; α = Cronbach's alpha;

Table 3: Results of discriminant validity

Model construct	R ²	1	2	3	4
1. Organizational culture	-	0.821			
2. Work values	-	0.672	0.722		
3. Religiosity	-	0.427	0.490	0.701	
4. Corruption	0.482	0.584	0.658	0.443	0.955

Note: Diagonals number (in bold) represent the square root of AVE while the other entries represent the correlation coefficients; R² = R square.

Table 3 displays the result of discriminant validity of all constructs in this study. According to Cornel and Larcker (1981), the square root of the value of AVE should be more than the correlation coefficient of the two constructs to support discriminant validity. As shown in Table 3, each square root of AVE value is more than the correlation coefficient; thus, discriminant validity is supported, suggesting that there was no multicollinearity of items in representing their hypothesized latent factors. Additionally, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the inter-item consistency of measurement items. As depicted in Table 2, all

alpha values are above 0.60, as suggested by Nunnally and Berstein (1994). As such, it can be concluded that all measurements in this study are valid and reliable.

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

Table 4 presents the results of the PLS analysis. The results show that 48.2% of the variance in corruption is explained by organizational culture, work values and religiosity. The results of the study show that only religiosity has a non-significant influence on corruption ($\beta = 0.129$, $t = 1.375$, $p > 0.01$). Meanwhile, organizational culture ($\beta = 0.237$, $t = 3.157$, $p < 0.01$) and work values ($\beta = 0.436$, $t = 4.608$, $p < 0.01$) are found to have a substantial impact on corruption ($\beta = 0.556$, $p < 0.01$). Hence, H1 and H2 are supported but H3 is rejected.

Table 4: *Path coefficients and hypotheses testing*

Hypotheses	Relationship	Coefficient	t value	Supported
H1	Organizational culture → corruption	0.237	3.157**	Yes
H2	Work value → corruption	0.436	4.608**	Yes
H3	Religiosity → corruption	0.129	1.375	No

Note: t value > 2.58 = significant at ** $p < 0.01$

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The results reveal that employees' organizational culture and work values do play a significant role in determining corruption censure among Gen Y employees. The results show that organizational culture and work values play a significant role in determining employees' perception of corruption censure. This means that organizational culture which comprises values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour that represent an organization's working environment does influence corruption censure among the younger generation. In addition, work values which reflect the employees' attitude regarding what is "right", as well as their attitude about what an individual should expect in the workplace does impact corruption censure among the Generation Y employees.

However, the results reveal that religion does not influence corruption censure among Gen Y employees. This indicates there is no relationship between religiosity and corruption censure. Although religiosity is known to influence human behaviour and attitude, the non-influence of religion on corruption censure may indicate that an individual's ethical behaviour is not influenced by religious self-identity. This contradicts Weaver and Angle's (2002) view that self-identity is formed by the internalization of role expectation offered by religion. This could be because a strong religious belief which is universally based on fairness and honesty, gives direction to behaviour, discourages evil acts and encourages ethical values. Thus, faith in one's religion can create awareness to avoid corrupt practices. This can be seen in all religions, including Islam. Most religions teach fairness and discourage immoral acts. Hence, knowledge of one's religion and strong faith can increase honesty.

As a result, there is a need to continuously improve the existing HR practices in organizations, particularly with regards to enhancing work values and organizational culture because the results have evidenced the relationship of these variables in enhancing and improving managerial effectiveness of the public sector employees, particularly the Gen Y workers.

The findings indicate that a better understanding is needed by policy makers to identify factors that influence Gen Y perception on corruption. The results reveal that organizational culture plays a significant role in determining employees' perception of corruption. This means that organizational culture which comprises values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour that represent an organization's working environment does influence corruption censure among the younger generation. Thus, when this occurs, it will erode public respect for the government as a service provider and disappoint citizens, thus developing cynicism of the government (Park & Blenkinsopp, 2011). Besides, results also show that work values do influence employees to be involved in corruption. This is supported by Chandrakumara (2011) who indicates values may impact the behavior of employees. In addition, factors regarding religion, work values and culture have been the dominating factors influencing youngsters' perception of corruption and dealing with corruption censure. Their perception of an ideal society has changed. It is therefore important for Malaysia to nurture a healthy and resilient society as the country moves forward to achieve Vision 2020, i.e., to become an industrialized and developed country.

This study has successfully answered the objective, which is to examine the relationship between organizational culture, work values and religiosity and perception on corruption. The findings provide a better understanding of the relationship of these variables in order to enhance and improve managerial effectiveness of the public sector employees, particularly Gen Y workers. There is a need to constantly improve the existing HR practices at the organizational level, particularly to enhance work values and organizational culture in terms of values, attitude, beliefs and behaviour. Taken together, the results of this study lend support to the notion that work values and organizational culture have an impact on corruption censure among Gen Y public servants.

In conclusion, the results support that both work values and organizational culture have an effect on corruption, but religion does not influence their perception on corruption. Attempts to reform both the governance system and control corruption must take into account the cultural and work value factors if such attempts are to succeed, especially among the Gen Y workers. Corruption is a phenomenon that is prevalent in developing countries and is a major hindrance to progress. It could damage the development of the organization and society. Corruption is like a virus which could lead to organizational distrust, thus weakening societal values. It is crucial to both prevent and combat corruption. Corruption must be taken seriously by the management of public organizations and the public at large.

6.0 References

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